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Mr. *Walter's*

SERMON

ON

Regular Singing.

The ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael.

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A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Lecture held in BOSTON, by the SOCIETY for promoting

Regular & *Good* Singing,

And for Reforming the

Depravations and Debaſements

OUR

PSALMODY labours under,

In order to introduce the proper and true

Old Way of SINGING.

Now publiſhed at the Deſire of ſeveral MINISTERS that heard it, and at the Requeſt of the SOCIETY aforeſaid.

By THOMAS WALTER, M. A.
Miniſter of a Church in *Roxbury*.

Pſal. 100. 2. —— *Come before his Preſence with Singing.*
Pſal. 147. 1. *Praiſe ye the Lord; for it is good to ſing Praiſes to our God; for it is pleaſant, and Praiſe is comely.*

BOSTON: Printed by *J. Franklin*, for *S. Gerriſh*, near the Brick Meeting-Houſe in *Cornhill*, 1722.

To the Honourable

Paul Dudley, Esq;

One of His Majesty's COUNCIL for the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay* in *New-England*, and One of the Justices of the Superiour Court.

SIR,

THE Frequency and the Flattery of DEDICATIONS, have rendred them nauseous to the present nice and carping Age, when almost every one (one time or other) stands in the Capacity of a PATRON, or even he who is fittest for it, is overloaded with Praises. This gives a ready Disgust to the Reader; while he entertains

tains the Prejudice, either of their being too Common, or too Fulſome: And which Circumſtance carries in it the greateſt *Odium*, is not eaſy to be decided. But this ſhall never hinder me from making a Dedication, till ſuch time as the World can prove, that *the Abuſe of any Thing forbids the Uſe of it.*

MUST not Merit be owned and applauded where we find it, becauſe the moſt undeſerving have had their *Elogies?* And muſt Gratitude never be made Public, becauſe ſome have given Thanks, where they have ſcarce received?

BUT this is not ſo much the Deſign of this Dedication, as to requeſt the Favour of your reading over the following Sheets with your uſual Candor, and to accept them as a *Mirror*, (tho' I confeſs but a dimm one) in which you will ſee ſomething of the *ſweet Pſalmiſt of* Iſrael, and ſo far, an eminent Part of your own Character.

SIR,

THIS Sermon (with reſpect to its Publication) is the *Firſt-Fruits* of your *Young Miniſter*, who claims a *Paſtoral Care* from you, tho' of a different Kind; and who thought it his Duty to make you the Preſent of his firſt Productions.

THE

The DEDICATION.

THE *Society for promoting regular Singing* are to be applauded for their good and generous Design: God will honour them, and I hope our Churches will not fail to do so too. I am glad to hear of the Attempts made in another County in prosecution of the same noble Design, and that the Reverend Mr. *Brown* of *Reading* has justified and put Respect upon their Undertaking, by preaching a Sermon at a *Singing Lecture* there. I would fain hope it will not be long e'er the Ignorant will be convinced, that they have mistaken *Novelty* for *Antiquity*, and will be brought to own, that the *present Depravations of our Tunes*, which they now so pertinaciously adhere to, and unreasonably insist upon, can lay no manner of Claim to their beloved Title and Denomination of, THE GOOD OLD WAY.

Now, Sir, I hope, that the prefixing your Name to this Discourse, will add Authority to the weight of Argument there laid down, and be of no small Advantage to the forementioned Design, which I am confident will yield you some Satisfaction.

MAY the God of *Israel* increase your Excellent Gifts and Parts, especially the divine Skill of singing the Songs of *Zion*, and may this be a blessed Preparative to your joining the sweet and everlasting *Choirs* above! May

you

you improve in that glorious Exercise in the Church on Earth, which shall never have an End in Heaven!

This is the hearty Prayer and Desire of him who is,

Honoured SIR,

Your most Humble

And Obedient Servant,

THO. WALTER.

The ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael.

2 Sam. XXIII. 1.

—*The ſweet Pſalmiſt of* Iſrael.

I MUST humbly make my Apology for aſcending the Desk at this time, and entring upon a Service, which I know would be much better performed by many of my Fathers and Brethren in the Miniſtry, in this Place. And this not only for my ſelf, but for thoſe, who have, as it were, broken thro' Order and Superiority, and deſcended to ſo low a Choice, as that of the Perſon now addreſſing this worthy Audience. Their Excuſe and mine is this, That not the Character of a *Divine*, ſo much as that of a *Pſalmiſt* is under our preſent Conſideration: Not the *Preacher*, but the *Singer* carried the Vote, which laid him under Obligations to comply with their Requeſt.

WHEREFORE that Juſtice in ſome meaſure may be done to the Divine Science of *Muſic* and *Verſe*, I ſhall have done with Prefaces and Apologies, and as in my poor Man-

ner

ner I am able, illuſtrate, confirm and improve the Text under Conſideration.

THE laſt and dying Words of Men uſe to be of Weight and Importance with the Survivors; and by them are wont to be eſteemed awful and full of Authority. How regardleſs ſoever we have been of the Sayings of wiſe and good Men, while they have been with us; yet that very Circumſtance of their *leaving this World*, gives Solemnity and Authority to what they deliver at their Departure out of it. Who knows not, that a Man *a dying* is able to make a greater and deeper Impreſſion upon us, than any of the *Living*? For as Time is drawing to a cloſe with *them*, ſo do they ſpeak with a more than humane *Emphaſis*, and diſcover ſuch an *experimental Air*, as cannot fail to touch the Hearers with the moſt lively and affecting Senſe of what they would communicate to them. As their Minutes are then contracted and grow very precious, ſo their Diſcourſe to the Living grows maſſy and full, it even fills up Time it ſelf, admitting no Vacancy of Moments unrepleniſhed with a Treaſure.

THE four Verſes following my Text are worthy to be tranſcribed as ſuch, and may ſerve as a glorious Introduction to our Diſcourſe upon the *Sweet Pſalmiſt of* Iſrael; viz. *David*'s Character as a ſweet Singer, the Honour done him by God in the Record hereof, and the bleſſed End a Servant of God, famous for this Skill, may be able to make.

THIS *ſweet Pſalmiſt of* Iſrael *ſaid* with a more than mortal Eloquence—— *The Spirit of the Lord ſpake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue. The God of* Iſrael *ſaid, the Rock of* Iſrael *ſpake to me: He that ruleth over Men muſt be juſt, ruling in the Fear of God; and he ſhall be as the light of the Morning, when the Sun riſeth, even a Morning without Clouds; as the tender Graſs ſpringing out of the Earth by clear ſhining after Rain. Altho' my Houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure: For this is all my Salvation and all my Deſire, altho' he make it not to grow.*

Here

HERE we have verified the Fable of the expiring *Swan* singing her own Elegy; but with this Difference, that our dying Psalmist tunes his Voice to Notes of Joy and Triumph, and not to the Keys of Mourning and Sadness. These are *David*'s last Words, this his dying Song, which better than a Monument of Brass, will consecrate his deathless Fame to all Posterity.

BUT *who* and *what* was he, that composed and sung this divine Song?—— *It was* David *the Son of* Jesse, *and the Man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of* Jacob. Even the Son of a common and inferior Man in *Israel*, but exalted to the Regal Dignity and Charge over that great and holy Nation, by the *anointing of the God of* Jacob. The last Words of so great a Man, and so distinguished in the Honours conferred upon him by Heaven, must command in us the most serious Attention and the highest Regard imaginable. They are the rich Legacy of a dying Prince, and to be received and laid up as an inestimable Treasure.

BUT this is not *all* of the noble Character of *David*, which does thus extort from us a Regard and Reverence to this his concluding Speech and Song. He that spake it, was not only a Godlike Prince, preferred by God himself before all the great Personages of *Israel* to the Inheritance of the Kingly Power and Honours; but he was THE SWEET PSALMIST OF ISRAEL.

THIS Part of his Character comes under our present Consideration. Here therefore two Things are to be spoken to, which will comprise the whole of our present Discourse.

I. THE *Character* of holy *David*.
II. THE *Honour* done him in the *Record* of it.

I. THE *Character* of holy *David*: *The sweet Psalmist of* Israel. He was a *Psalmist*, which Title contains in it two things, namely, *First*, That as a Divine *Poet*, he composed Sacred Songs, and Hymns. Our *Psalter* is the greatest Part of it, made up of Divine Pieces of Poesy written by this Man of God, who derived his *Inspiration* not from *Parnassus*,

nassus, but from *Zion* the Mount of God. Not the fancied *Muses* of the Heathen, but the *Holy Ghost* dictated his Song; nor needed he a Draught from the muddy Source of *Helicon*, who had drank so plentifully of the still and pure Stream (as the almost Divine *Milton* expresses it) *flowing fast by the Oracle of God.* Nor were the *Subjects* of *his* Verse less Divine, than his *Inspiration.* Not sorry Trifles and empty Fables, but the glorious Themes of divine Love, and Wisdom, and Power, and Majesty; not the impure and carnal Conceits of the profane *Greeks* and *Romans*, but the blessed and holy Oracles of JEHOVAH, and the cælestial Loves of Christ and his Church, were sung by him in his immortal Strain. Finally, the *Design and End* of his *Psalms* were consecrate and pious, even to the great and good Intentions of the Glory of God, and the Instruction and Benefit of Men.

BUT then, *Secondly*, The Title of *Psalmist* carries in it not only that of a *Poet*, but of a *Musician* also. Not only the Psalms, but the Tunes to which they were to be set and sung, were his. And the best both of Jewish and Christian Interpreters and Expositors do give Countenance to this Conjecture. But be this as it will, that his Skill both in Vocal and Instrumental *Music* was famous, is allowed upon all Hands. Whether or no he composed the Tunes, as well as the Psalms, which he frequently sent to the *Præcentor* or *Chief Musician*, with his Orders for having them sung or played, may admit of some Dispute. But that he had a thorough Understanding of this sweet and divine Science is a matter past all doubt. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* Versions do favour our first Conjecture, and do intimate the Improvements he made in this Part of the Divine Service. They render the Words, *Qui suaves reddidit Cantus Israelis*; Who *made the Songs of* Israel *sweet.* He raised them to a greater Perfection and Sweetness, than had ever been in *Israel* before. But to put this beyond all Dispute, we are in the Sacred Oracles informed, that *David* did *invent Instruments of Music*, which were profanely imitated, and prostituted to the Designs of Debauchery, by the wanton *Israelites*, in the Days of the Pro-

Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 6. Verse 5. *They invent to themselves Instruments of Music like* David. We also read, that he separated or set apart to the Services of Vocal and Instrumental Music, the Sons of *Asaph*, *Heman* and *Jeduthun*; appointing to every single Musician and to each Quire their Parts in the joint Performance of the Melodies and Anthems of the Temple. Whether for the Voice, or for Instruments, such as the Cymbal, Psaltery, Harp, the loud sounding or Treble Horn; their Disposition and Appointment was by the King's Order. 1 *Chron.* 25. 1, 2, 6. And this he did, not meerly by Virtue of his Kingly Authority, but as he was the *Chief Master* of the Temple-Music, his superiour Skill therein rendring him the fittest Person in all *Israel* for that Office. But of this enough.

DAVID was the *Psalmist of* Israel; that is *of the Church of God*, which wears this Name and Title, with which the Patriarch *Jacob* was dignified, when he had wrestled with the Angel of God in Prayer, and overcame: in this glorious Instance becoming the Head and Representative of them that *seek the Face of God*. Psal. 24. 6. He became thenceforward the Father of the Generation of wrestlers in Prayer, the Prince of them that prevail with the Almighty God of *Jacob*. *Israel* is a most proper and just Appellation of the *Church Militant* on Earth, who thro' holy Violence, strong Faith, and ardent Importunity, maugre all the Opposition of Hell and Earth, *take the Kingdom of Heaven by Force*. Math. 11. 12. O that in this sweet Exercise of *Singing*, as well as the more laborious one of *Prayer*, we might make such Improvements and Progress, as to deserve the honourable Name of *Israelites indeed!*

FOR the Use and Benefit of the *Church* then did *David* compose his *Psalms*, with *Tunes* adapted to the Subject Matter of them. It is a very profitable and good Note of *Peter Martyr* upon our Text, *Quicquid Pii Doctrinæ habent, id intelligunt non suum, sed Ecclesiæ esse. A good Man calls the Gifts and Talents Heaven endows him with, not his own, but the Church's.* With whatsoever Skill the Father of Lights instructs us, it is not designed by God, nor should it be laid out by us, for our private Use, Profit

or Glory; but for God and his *Church*. And a faithful Servant of God beholds all his Accomplishments, whether Natural, Moral or Divine, under no other Notion or View, than that of so many Consecrations to God, or Talents for the Improvement of which he is accountable to him. The Glory and Honour of God, the Good and Edification of the Church, is that to which they are to be ultimately and at all Times referred. And this is here recorded to the everlasting Honour of King *David*, with respect to his religious Improvement of his extraordinary *Poetical* and *Musical* Abilities. Which hints a severe Reproof of the Licentious *Poesy* and *Music* of the present Age.

FINALLY, He was a *SWEET Psalmist*; in both the former Respects, even of his *Music* and his *Poesy*. And this is what must come under a more large and distinct Consideration. We are now therefore to discourse of *Divine Music*, and *Divine Poesy*: The latter relates to the *Subject matter* of the Song, the former to the *Manner and Form* of the Tune, to which it is to be set or sung. Wherefore

1. *MUSIC* considered alone and in it self, *is a sweet and pleasant Science*. The Charms of *Music* are a most celebrated Subject among the best Writers. And they are so various and so sweet, that it is equally impossible to number them, and sufficiently to admire them. There is scarce any thing in the whole Creation of God, so wonderful and astonishing, as the Doctrine of *Sounds* and *Harmony*. We shall attempt a Discourse of the Sweetness of Music under the two following Heads.

1. *MUSIC is in its own Nature sweet and pleasant.*
2. *IT is sweet and pleasant in the various Effects it produces in the Souls of Men.*

1. *MUSIC is in its own Nature sweet and pleasant.* There is a twofold Sweetness and Pleasancy of Sounds and Musical Notes, according to the best Writers. There is, in the *first* Place, a *Natural or Physical Sweetness* in the Notes of Music. When a *single* Voice or String of an Instrument so equally and justly vibrates the Air, as to give forth a Sound agreeable to the Organ of the Ear. Being free from

from all Jarr or Asperity, it strikes the *Auditory Nerves* in such Manner as one *Unison* String percuss'd or strook, causes the other to shake and tremble. When the external Air is thus vibrated, the same or a like Vibration is effected in the internal Air reposited in the Cavity of the Organ, and this communicates its even and just Motion to the Nerves aforesaid. In this Sense, even the unaffected chirping Notes and smooth Warbles of the very Birds of Heaven, those * *Idle Musicians of the Spring*, who are by their Creator, the Author of all Music, inspired with an harmonious Instinct; I say, in this Sense, even their artless Lays do serve to please and recreate us.

BUT then *Secondly*; There is a *Mathematical Sweetness and Pleasancy* in Sounds. This is no other than the Doctrine of *Concords*, to which there are required more Sounds than one, so proportioned and distanced in certain Intervals, as to create a pleasant *Harmony* and Agreement. The Pleasure arising from this *Mathematical Sweetness* or Agreement of Sounds, is a more *Intellectual* Pleasure; that from the *Physical* Sweetness, a more *Sensual*. Hence not only *all Men*, but the very *Brutes* too are capable of receiving a Delight in a single pleasant Sound or Voice, but *none* of the Brutal Race, nor *all* of the Humane are capable of relishing the *Melody* arising from the harmonious Agreement of a Diversity of Sounds. This requires a tuneful Soul, as well as a good Ear. As a late Anonymous Poet well expresses it——

For Man may justly tuneful Strains admire,
His SOUL is Music, and his Breast a Lyre.
Music the mighty Artist, Man can rule,
So long as that has Numbers, he a SOUL.

HERE let it be observed, that the *Lowness* and the *Height* of Sounds in the *Gamut* or Scale of Music, is not caused by the Strength and Force, but the *Frequency* of the Percussions, Strokes, or Tremors of the Air. And

* Lord *Roscommon*'s 148 *Psalm*.

And when the Numbers of Tremors or Percuſſions of the Air cauſed by two Sounds, are *proportionable*, there is an harmonious Agreement of thoſe *two Sounds*; but if diſproportionate, a Diſcord is produced. Thus an *Octave* or *Eighth* to a graver Sound, gives the Air *two* Percuſſions or Tremors to the others *one*. So they coincide every other Tremor; and one to two is proportionate. The like may be ſaid of all other Chords. A *Uniſon*, or two Notes on a Pitch, is when two Sounds give the Air an equal Number of Pulſes or Strokes, and therefore ſo coincide in every Pulſe, as to become but one and the ſame Sound.—— So that the Proportions that pleaſe the Eye in any *Viſible Objects*, are found to pleaſe the Ear in *Audible Objects*. And when two Concordant Notes of different Heights are Sounding, were the Sight of our Eyes ſo ſtrengthened and rendred ſo acute, as that we could accurately inſpect and diſcern the Particles of vibrated Air, we ſhould ſee the Tremors, or Vibrations of the Air *proportionate in Arithmetical Numbers*.—— But while I am thus wading in the depths of *Philoſophy*, I had almoſt forgot the chief Thing I firſt aimed at, when I mentioned the *mathematical Sweetneſs* of Sounds, and that is as follows.

THE *Muſic* of the Temple, as it was under the Management and Direction of our *Sweet Pſalmiſt of* Iſrael, was a *Chorus of Parts*. The Singers and the Players upon Inſtruments, were divided into THREE Sets or Quires. One for the *Baſs*, another for the *Medius* or inner Parts; the third for the *Trebles* or *Altus*'s. Mr. *Ford*, in his Preface to his Expoſition on the *Pſalms*, has done to my Hand, what I might have attempted; even to prove that *Muſic in Parts* (in ſpight of popular Ignorance) is as Ancient as the Times of holy *David*.—— I ſhall tranſlate into this Sermon, what he ſays upon this Head.

THE Modulation (ſays he) of the Voice only, or upon an Inſtrument only, or both together, (*Pſal.* 71. 22. and 98. 5. and 33. 2, 3. and 147. 7. and 149. 3. and 57. 8, 9.) was generally and for the moſt part performed in *three Parts*,

Parts, according to the Number of Concords in the *Octave*. For a Tone or Sound is either

1. Low, which is Grave, and is called the *Bass*. Or
2. Middle, which is commonly called the *Medius*, or *Tenor*. Or
3. High, which is called the *Alt*.

THESE with their Octaves and Variations, comprise the whole of all Music, and all of them were found in their Worship. [*Sheminith*] A Noun Adjective Feminine, signifying [an Eighth] is used to design or signify the *Eighth Voice*, or *Eighth Tone* in Musie, or *Eighth* Modulation of the Voice, which in descending may be called the *lowest* Tone. Therefore *Tremellius* and *Junius* render [*hhal hassheminith*] 1 *Chron.* 15. 21. *Psal.* 6. 1. By these Words, [*To a grave and low Symphony*] that is, to a *Bass* Note and Key. And because in 1 *Chron.* 15. 21. [*becinoroth*] or [*with Harps*] is added, we may gather thus much, that *Ethan* or *Jeduthun* lead upon the *Bass*, or had the Regulation of the *lower Parts*, and that the *Bass* was play'd upon that Instrument. And therefore he was the Master and Moderator of that Part, which we call the *Bass*, or at least of something *analogous* to it.

2. [*Hhalmah*] A Noun signifying *the Age of Virginity*, is used in the Plural Number for a Musical Tone or Sound at the *Height* of a *Female Voice*, which is an *Octave* above that of a *Man*. Wherefore [Hhal hhalamoth] 1 *Chron.* 15. 20. *Psal.* 46. 1. [With *Psalteries on Alamoth.*] *Junius* and *Tremellius* render [To an *acute Symphony*] or to the *Alt*. Now, since these Tunes upon *Alamoth* were play'd upon the *Psaltery*, and since it is as certain, that this Part is assigned to the Sons of *Corah*, it may be concluded, that *Heman* was the Master and Moderator of the *Altus* or highest Part. *

3. *Asaph*

* I know not why the Opinion of *Pythagoras* being the *first*, that in Opposition to *Aristoxenus*, reduced the Scale of Musie to the Measure of the *Octave*, may not from hence be refuted; and

3. *Asaph* therefore was the Master of the *Medius* or middle Quire, and the Instrument used by them was that of the *Cymbal*.

UPON the whole, this Author gives us a general Rule of judging to what Part and Keys every Psalm was designed, from the Name of the Master of Music, from the Instrument on which it was to be plaid, or the initial Words of some other well known Divine Song in use at that Time; which the Reader may learn, if he diligently observes the *Inscriptions*, &c. of the Psalms, and compares them with what has been said above.

BUT it is Time to pass on to the Second Particular, which is,

2. *MUSIC is sweet and pleasant, if we consider the various Effects it is capable of producing in us.* There is something in *Music*, which is congenial to the Soul, and which for this Reason makes a ready Passage into its inmost Recesses. It has a Power to strike it after the most agreeable Manner, and to affect it with the Sense of a strange and admirable Pleasure. There is a certain secret *Sympathy* between the Soul and Harmony, which made a Philosopher mentioned in the Margin, define it, *An Harmony*. Verily, the Joy arising hence is truly refined and sublime! The ingenious *Cowley* well expresses the Power *Musicians* may exercise over Men:

Thus they our Souls, thus they our Bodies win,
Not by their Force, but Party that's within.
So when two Brethren Strings *are set alike,*
To move them both, but one of them we strike.

BUT

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why we may not suppose, that, since learned Men have fully proved the Derivation and Stealth of all Arts and Sciences from the *Jews* to the *Gentile Philosophers*, this among other Pieces of Learning, came to *Pythagoras* the same Way. And without doubt the *Divine Music* performed to *Jehovah* in his Temple, was in a great Measure by *Divine Inspiration*, as well as the *Architecture* of the Tabernacle (in it self a more *Mechanical* Part) was in Model and *Idea* given to *Aholiab and Bezaleel*. Exod. 31. 3. *I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in Wisdom and in Understanding, and in Knowledge, and in all manner of Workmanship.*

BUT let us come to the *Theological* Consideration of the Point, and shew the blessed Influence and Effects of Harmony upon the Soul, as it is helpful to Devotion, either to excite, assist, promote or preserve it.

1. *IT creates a most blessed Serenity and quiet Calm in the Soul of the Worshipper.* He that would worship God aright, ought to possess a quiet Mind, free from the Disturbance and Agitation of Passions. So when the Soul of holy *David* was disquieted in him, he knew not how to apply himself to the sweet Exercise of Singing in the Temple. *Psal.* 42. 11. and 43. 4. His Thoughts within him were tumultuous, and various Passions haunted his Breast, while he was revolving in his Mind the Oppression of the Enemy, his Absence from the House of God, and other afflictive and distressing Themes; he became hereupon wholly unfit for religious Exercises. So the *Jews* in the *Babylonish* Captivity hung their neglected Harps upon the Willows, when they remembred *Zion*, and their once glorious and happy State, amidst the Insults of their barbarous Enemies. Say they, *How shall we sing the Lord's Songs in a strange Land?* Psal. 137. 4. Which is a sure Proof how driving Passions, such as Anger, Grief, Hatred, Fear, *&c.* do ruffle the Soul, and wholly indispose it to the Exercises of Religion and Devotion. Any further Proofs from Scripture are needless. All that I shall Remark upon these Instances is this, when they were so unfitted for Devotion, as that they had not the Inclination or Power to play upon their *Harps*, their very Harps, had they used them, would have been their Cure, and have allayed the very Passions, which forbad them to play.

LET us now consider the Charms of *Music*; how do they soothe the Soul to Rest, and reduce it to an heavenly Quietude and Temper! How do they allay the turbid Passions, and chace the Disturbers out of our Breast! *Music* has a natural Tendency to this. For as it is capable of being so ordered, as to raise and increase tumultuous Passions in the Soul; so no less to allay and quiet these Disorders. The Story of *Timotheus*, who with his Harp changed the Temper of *Alexander*, as often as he pleased to change

change his Notes and Keys; either * *to swell his Soul to Rage*, or enkindle the softer Passions, or to lull it into a total Calm. The Stories also of *Pythagoras*, *Asclepiades*, and others mentioned by *Gronovius* and *Kircher*, are a full Proof of the Power of Harmony, either to raise or to calm the Passions. The *Thracian Orpheus* taming wild Beasts, and disarming them of their Fury, is, if we moralize the *Fable*, † no other than his subduing the fierce Tempers and Passions of that brutal and savage People of *Thrace*, reclaiming them to Civility, and making them Manageable by his *Music*.

BUT if Music alone can by its natural Force and Charms work these Effects, what may not *Divine Harmony*, under the Influence and Co-operation of Heaven, be able to produce in the Soul of the Worshipper! *Psal.* 43. 3, 4. *Send forth thy Light and thy Truth; let them bring me to thy holy Hill, and to thy Tabernacles. Then will I go to the Altar of God, unto God my exceeding Joy:* (or the *Gladness of my Joy*) *Yea, upon the Harp will I praise thee, O God, my God!*

2. *MUSIC is of good use to suspend and cure the evil and malign Influences of Satan on the Soul.* Besides our natural Passions, which are oftentimes turbid and troublesome, and so do unfit the Soul for Devotion, *Satan* may be permitted to interpose his Agency and Influence, to increase and heighten these Diforders of the Mind. When we give way to sinful Passions, *Satan* finds an easy Passage into the Soul. He usually makes his Entrance thro' a Storm, and like a true hater of Peace and Harmony, takes a malicious and cruel Pleasure, in his Mansion of Discord and Uproar. Had we not upon Sacred Record the Instance of *Saul*, &c. I believe we need not go very far to seek Instances enough of Persons agitated and acted by the Furies of Hell. But to go no farther than that of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from* Saul, *and an evil Spirit troubled* or terrified *him*. His Servants gave very proper Advice in

* *Dryden's* Ode. † *Dictus ob hoc lenire Tigres, rabidosque Leones.* *Hor. Ars Poet.*

in this Difficulty, *&c.* That *a sweet Musician* or *Harper* should be found to play before the King upon his seizure with the satanical Paroxism. Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, when the evil Spirit from God was upon* Saul, that David *took an Harp and played with his Hand*; *so* Saul *was refreshed and was well, and the evil Spirit departed from him.* His Terrors vanished, the *Dæmon* fled precipitant from the Harmony, and his burdened Mind strait grew easy and sweetly composed. An heavenly Light darted into his Soul, and all was calm and bright, serene and joyous. Or to use the Words of the sweet *Cowly*,

——His *Harp did* Saul's *wild Rage controul,*
And tune the harsh Disorders of his Soul.

What the *Hyperbolizing Pindar* said to his *Harp*, [*Ton aicmaton keraunon sbennueis*] *thou quenchest the raging Thunder*, may with much better Justice be ascribed to the *Harp of* David, which wrought mightier Effects and more amazing Feats, which could still a louder and more angry *Thunder* than that of the Firmament, and silence and put to flight a raging *Dæmon.*

BUT it must be *Music* with the Consort of the holy Spirit, even the religious *Music* of the Soul, joined with that of the Voice, which must work these blessed Effects in the Soul of him, who is preparing himself to call upon God, and to approach him in the Exercises of Devotion, and holy Communion. When these go together, not only does the *evil Spirit* depart, and cease to disturb us (as in the Case of *Saul*) but the holy Ghost, that heavenly Guest will return, and inspire us and fill us with all Joy and Consolation. That *Music* is of use in this Matter, not only to cure the evil Influences and malignant Impressions of Satan, but also to prepare our Souls for the Entrance of the *holy Ghost* into this his spiritual Mansion and living Temple, may be argued from the Manner of *Prophesying* used by some of the Prophets. Thus *Elisha*, 2 *King.* 3. 15. *But now bring me a Minstrel, and it came to pass, when the Minstrel played, that the Hand of the Lord came upon him.*

The Note of *Tremellius* and *Junius* * is very just and good. *By the help of this Music, the Soul of the Prophet, just before discomposed and roiled at the sight of the wicked King of* Israel, *was composed and calmed, and so prepared to deliver the heavenly Oracle; and they that heard it were by its Sweetness better prepared for the Reception of it.* And those Words, *The Hand of the Lord came upon him*, the forementioned Expositors, by a *Metonymy*, interpret of the *Prophetic Energy and Rapture*, into which the Prophets were cast, when the Spirit visited and took Possession of them; in a Word, *the Gift of Prophecy*. And here I cannot forbear transcribing the Words of Bishop *Beveridge* upon this Subject of *Music*, which may at once illustrate this and the following Head. Says he, § "*Music* exercises "at once both my Body and my Soul, *&c.* it calls in my "Spirits, composes my Thoughts, delights my Ear, recre- "ates my Mind, and so not only fits me for after Business, "but fills my Heart at the present with pure and useful "Thoughts; so that when the *Music* Sounds sweetliest "in my Ears, Truth commonly flows the clearest into my "Mind. And hence it is, that I find my Soul is become "more Harmonious, by being accustomed so much to *Har-* "*mony*, and so averse to all manner of *Discord*, that the "least jarring Sounds either in Notes or Words, seem ve- "ry harsh and unpleasant to me.

"THAT there is (says he) something more than ordi- "nary in *Music*, appears from *David*'s making use of it, "for *driving away* the evil Spirit from *Saul*; and *Elisha* "for the *bringing the good Spirit* upon himself. From "which I am induced to believe, that there is really a "sort of secret and charming Power in it, that naturally "dispels from the Mind, all or most of those black Hu- "mours, which the evil Spirit uses to brood upon, and "by composing it into a more regular, sweet, and docible "Disposition, renders it the fitter for the *Holy Spirit* to "work upon, the more susceptive of Divine Grace, and "the

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* Vid. *Jun. & Tremell. in Locum.*

§ *Private Thoughts.* P. 182. *N. Eng. Edition.*

" more faithful Messenger, whereby to convey Truth to " the Understanding, *&c.*—— My Spirits are thereby made " the more nimble and active, and by Consequence, the " fitter to wait upon my Soul, and be employed by her, " in whatsoever Business she is engaged.

THUS far he; and this is not the only Instance of the Use of *Music* in *Prophesying*; (which Word, by the Way, is not to be restrained to what we call *Prediction*, or the foretelling future Events by the Revelation of the Spirit of God, but comprises also in its Meaning, the Power or Faculty of uttering any sort of Divine Discourses, by virtue of an *Impetus* or immediate Power from the holy Spirit) I say, this is not the only Instance of the Use of *Music* in order to *Prophesying*. The forementioned *Saul* meeting a company of Prophets with their *Music* in the prophetical Exercise, is a further Confirmation of the Argument before us. 1 *Sam.* 10. 5, 6. *After that, thou shalt come to the Hill of God, where is the Garrison of the* Philistines, *and it shall come to pass when thou art come thither to the City, that thou shalt meet a company of Prophets coming down from the high Place, with a Psaltery, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and a Harp before them, and they shall Prophesy. And the* Spirit of the Lord *will come upon thee, and thou shalt Prophesy with them, and shalt be TURNED INTO ANOTHER MAN.*

BUT to have done with particular Instances, let me add, that not only single Persons have occasionally made use of *Music*, as a fit preparative for the Reception of the Spirit of God, but the *stated Quires* of the Church of *Israel* in their *Ordinary Worship*, proposed no less Benefit from this divine Science, according to the Appointment of God. *So the Sons of Jeduthun, Gedaliah, Zeri,* &c. *under the Hands of their Father Jeduthun, prophesied with an Harp to give Thanks and to Praise the Lord.* 1 Chron. 25. 3.

UPON the whole we may conclude, that Music is not only a Means provided by the God of Nature and the Author of all Religion, to dispel and drive away the evil Influences of Satan, but also to prepare the Soul for the Reception of the Inspiration of the holy Spirit. Nor will

the Objection of any thing *Typical or Extraordinary* in these Matters take away the Use of that which then had a natural Subserviency and Tendency to produce these good Effects, and prepare the Soul for the sublimest Performances in Religion and Worship. But

3. *MUSIC happily serves to fix the Mind upon religious Objects, abstracting the Soul from every Diversion.* It sweetly fixes the wandring Spirit, making us retire within our selves, and be wholly employed in the present holy and delightful Exercise. It reduces the Mind to such a sweet Composure, as that all our Attention is fastened upon the Subject of our Devotion. This *Fixedness of Soul* is a necessary Preparation for our Entrance upon any Religious Employments, especially those of the Temple. So we find holy *David* addressing himself to the Worship of God. *Psal.* 57. 7, 8. *My Heart is fixed,* [or *prepared*; a fixed Heart is a prepared Heart.] *O God, my Heart is fixed; I will sing and give Praise. Awake my Glory, awake Psaltery and Harp; I my self will awake early. Divine Music,* under the Conduct and Influence of the blessed Spirit, the Author of all inward and spiritual Harmony, is an effectual Remedy for those desultory, loose, and vagrant Frames of Spirit, which the most devout Christians oftentimes experience, and as often bewail. It collects the scattered Powers of the Mind, and so unites them, that the Soul with unwonted Vigour and Strength mounts as on *the Wings of Eagles,* pursuing the glorious Flight, till she is gotten beyond the View of mortal Things, and enters the *holy of holies* above. Then is she rais'd and transported beyond the Limits of Time and Sense, and is seated in the Lap of Eternity; where she dwells upon everlasting Themes, and becomes a sharer in the sweet and uninterrupted Bliss of Angels and glorified Saints.

4. *MUSIC is of good Use in Religious Worship, to excite and improve suitable and proper Affections, according to the Diversity of Subjects, about which it is employed.* The God of Nature has, beside the *Intellectual and Volitive* Faculty, implanted in the Soul of Man, divers Affections and Passions.

sions. These are so many *Ministers* to the superior Powers of Understanding and Willing. And by Consequence, as these two are the *prime Faculties* of the Soul, which ought ever to be first in Exercise in our religious Approaches to the Divine Being, (the *Intellect* being the Power of spiritual Apprehension, Knowledge and Faith, and the *Will* the Principle of Divine Love, and all Devotion,) I say, as those two Faculties are primarily and principally employed in all religious Exercises; so these Affections and Passions be of subordinate Use, and are subservient to the same Designs of Religion and Devotion. For it was a gross Mistake in those Philosophers, who asserted them to be but the *Foibles* or Weaknesses of the Soul, and *naturally Sinful*. No, they are naturally and physically *Good*, and when they have been endowed with the Sanctification of the Holy Ghost, they are of great and noble Use in Religion. This may serve to illustrate that of the Apostle *Paul*, 1 Thess. 5.23. where he prays, that *the God of Peace would sanctify them wholly, and preserve their whole Spirit, Soul and Body*, &c. That is, not only the superior Powers of the Mind, such as the Intellect and Will; and the inferior and mechanic Powers of the Body; but also the *passionate and affectionate* Part, which is of a mixt Nature, partly Animal and partly Spiritual. Now when these are *sanctified*, they become capable of a most excellent Use and Improvement in Religion, especially in all the devotionary Parts thereof. They are as it were the Wings of the Soul, whereby it is carried forth in all the Acts of holy Joy and Transport; Contrition and Mourning; Fervency and Zeal, and the like. But now what is more suited and adapted to excite and preserve these Affections in their due and proper Exercise, than *Music and Harmony?* Whether the religious Soul be wholly employed upon Subjects of Contrition and Penitence, Sorrow and Mourning, *Music* can furnish it with melancholy and graver Ayres: Or, if it dwells upon Themes of Joy and Praise, the loud and sprightly Notes of the more chearful Keys shall raise the Soul to GOD, the Author of all good, and the Object of all our *high Praises*. And so of the rest. Wherefore we frequently find the *sweet Psalmist of* Israel sending his Psalms

Psalms and Odes to the *Chief Musician*, to be set to these or those *Tunes* then practised in the Church of *Israel*. And the Inscriptions and Titles of the Psalms do hint to us his Directions to the *Master of Music* in this Matter. Altho' the *Tunes* then in Use, and their Names and Keys are now to be reckoned among the *Res deperditæ*, lost in the Ruins of Antiquity.

BUT now we have been discoursing of *Music*, as it is able to excite and preserve proper and suitable *Passions* and *Affections*, and to assist the *Soul* in the *due Exercise* of them, agreeable to the Variety of Themes or Subjects about which it is conversant; we are by a natural Transition to pass on to the Consideration of *Music* in its Conjunction with *Divine Poesy*. Wherefore,

2. *AS MUSIC* in it self and seperately considered *is Sweet, so much more does it deserve that Character, when considered* in its Conjunction *with DIVINE POESY*. Music joined with *Numbers* is in a transcendent Degree *Sweet*. *Kircher* † in his Book intituled, *The great Art of Concord and Discord*, among the *Four* Things requisite to move and affect the Soul, reckons that as a principal one, *viz. efficacious and pathetical Words* joined with the Harmony or Music. Thus the *Phrygian* Music, of which such mighty and wonderful Effects were boasted by Antiquity, was a sort of *enthusiastic Harmony*, or *speaking Melody*. Which tho' it is to be added to the Catalogue of *the lost Sciences*, yet is it in some Measure imitable, by suiting and adapting *Tunes* to the *Subject Matter of the Song*.

HERE therefore in general a *good Version of the Psalms* is to be pleaded for, where *moving Words* and *moving Sounds* go together *. Dr. *Woodford*'s Words in his Preface to his *Paraphrase on the Psalms* may be here recited, and if he speaks wrong, let his Fellow-Poets answer for him.

"How miserably, says he, have the greatest Part of "Translators been overseen, whilst all their Pains has been "be

† Vid. *Kircher. De Arte Magna Consoni & Dissoni.* * Vid. *Quintilian Inst. Orat. Lib. 6. Cap. De Divisione affectuum & quomodo movendi.*

" bestowed to compose a few ill contrived Cadences, put-
" ting themselves to an unimaginable Torture to make
" those Conceptions intollerable by the straitness of Verse,
" which else might have done well enough in looser Prose.
" To them are we beholden for the low Esteem *Poesy* now
" has amongst us, tho' at the same time they have not
" only rendred *that* ridiculous, but humbled *Divinity*,
" which supplies the *Poet* with his noblest and most
" lofty Subjects. You may in the Psalms see *Divinity*
" flourishing upon the Root of *Poesy*, and *that* again load-
" ed with the generous Productions of *Divinity*; both so
" inseparably united each to other, that like Stock and
" Cyon they make but one Plant, and leave it hard
" to be judged, whether the Author were the greater *Di-*
" *vine* or *Poet*. And hence the Title of *Vates* comprehend-
" ed both those sublime Functions of a *Divine* and a *Poet*.
Thus far he. * And what he says, is much more moderate and tollerable than that bitter and *sarcastical* Expression of *Cowly*, ‖ that such Translators seem to him to *revile him worse than* Shimei. But to have done with a *Topic*, which may incur Displeasure, I am bold to affirm, *that there is no Prose so intollerable as ordinary Verse.*

WHAT we are now more especially to speak to, is this, that if we descend to the *particular Subjects of Divine Poesy*, it will at first Thought be granted, that the Words and Matter of our spiritual Songs, suited and set to a proper *Music*, convey a wonderful Charm into the Soul of a religious Worshipper. The sweetness of these in their Conjunction is truly *Ineffable!*

To be brief;

EVEN Contrition and Sorrow for Sin, are sweet Subjects of Music to a penitent Soul. To confess our Sins in a Psalm, O how sweet is it! The Music gives a refreshing Vent to our

* Now we are on the Head of *good Words joined with good Music*, let me take Notice of a very great Fault in our Version of the Psalms, observed to me by a Minister once in a private Conversation: Said he, How ill that grave and mournful Psalm 137. suits with the Metre, which is a perfect Set of Jingles.

‖ Preface to his *Pindaric Odes*.

our pressing Grief, and relieves the Agonies of the Mind. While the Soul is pouring out it self in the most melting Strains, it conceives the sense of the Love of God, and the assurance of a Pardon and Interest in his Favour. The kindly Contrition is mixed with an holy Joy thro' the Love of God shed abroad in the Soul!

AGAIN, *The Themes of Sorrow and Mourning thro' Losses and Trouble and Afflictions, may by a good Use of* Music, *and* Psalms, *be converted into the most glorious Strains of Piety.* The Vanity of the World and all its fading Joys, the tossing Inquietudes and bitter Crosses of a Christian, as they ought not to hurry him into a criminal Anxiety or Murmuring, Discontent, or Diffidence; so he can calmly turn them into a Song. And as he believes there is an *Harmony* of Justice Wisdom and Mercy in all the Dispensations of Providence, how discordant and uncouth soever they may appear, so his Soul and his Voice afford you a lively Emblem of his sweet Resignation to, and harmonious Acquiescence in them.

BUT to proceed; *The Precepts of our Duty are a fit Matter for a Psalm*, and O how sweet is it with holy *David*, to make the *Statutes of God our Songs!* ‖ Holy Resolutions and pious Vows sent up to Heaven in the pleasant Conveyance of *Music and Psalms*, O how *Sweet* is the Exercise! Nothing can more engage and dispose the religious Mind to the Performance of those Vows, than this sweet Manner of Uttering them. * Thus to make Religion and the *Laws* of God the Theme of our Songs, argues an *enlarged Soul running* with Vigour and Alacrity *the Ways of his Commandments!* With an holy Chearfulness and a certain Strength of Joy he sings, *O how do I love thy Law, it is my Meditation all the Day; thy Testimonies are Wonderful, therefore doth my Soul keep them!* †

Once more, *OUR Prayers are sweetly and gloriously conveyed to Heaven in the Chariot of Music and Praise!* when we turn our very Supplications into Joy, thro' a strong Faith and Assurance of an Answer. When we sing the Promises, the Benefits, the Mediator, and the God of the New

‖ *Psal.* 119. 51. * Psal. 116. 12. *to the End.* † *Psal.* 119. 97. 129.

New Covenant, and mix a grateful Variety of Praise and Prayer. Such a Saint, is he in *Heaven*, or is he on *Earth*? Indeed the Matter of his Song is *Prayer*, and so belongs to one *on this side* Heaven; but his *Soul* and his *Voice* would make you think him actually *there*, in the full Possession and Fruition of what he is *praying for!*

LET me add; *The Triumphs of the Redeemed are best sounded forth in the Songs of Zion!* † Their glorious Victories over Sin and the World, Death and Hell, thro' the Blood of the Lamb; as on Earth they begin these Songs of Triumph, and raise their Notes in Proportion to the Progress and Greatness of them; so when in Heaven they shall commence perfect and compleat Victors, they shall tune their Harps to loud and everlasting Strains of Joy!

Finally, *ADORATION and Praise of God the Father, Christ the Redeemer, and the holy Spirit the Sanctifier of the Church, and the Applier of Redemption to it, are a* sweet *Song that shall never have an End!* The Perfections, the Bounties, and the Grace of the Everliving JEHOVAH, *Father, Son, and holy Ghost*, the Fountain of all Good, and Life and Happiness, are inexhaustible Themes of Praise. CHRIST the Redeemer, the glorious and incomprehensible *God-Man*, the Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, the Purchaser and Sender of the HOLY GHOST, the glorified Head of the Church, and the Author of Eternal Life to all that believe, are a Subject of everlasting *Hallelujahs!* *

EVEN the Mercies of *common Providence* ought to fill our Mouths with the Praises of God; but the vast and infinite Bequests of the *Kingdom of Grace*, and the Hopes, Pledges and Foretasts of the Blessings of the *Kingdom of Glory*, O, how should they rouse and constrain us to *call upon our Souls and all within us, to bless* and praise *his holy Name*,

† *Psal.* 97. 8. *Psal.* 146. and 147. 12, 13. and 148. 14 and 149. *Psal.* 14. 7. *Isai.* 52. 7, 8, 9. and 51. 3. 11. *and innumerable other glorious Prophesies of the Victories of the Church.* * *Rev.* 4. 8. *to the End.* and 5. 9. *to the End. A glorious Representation of the Quires and Antiphonies of the heavenly Worship, where they answer one another in the sweet Echoes of the Praises of God and Christ. God grant we may one Day join them!*

Name, and upon our *Glory*, (that is, our *Voice*) to awake and join in the eternal Consort!

O how sweet, how sweet is Praise! How pleasant and † *comely to sing to our God! While I have Breath, O Lord, my God and my Redeemer, I will employ it in celebrating thy Name and thy Praise!*

BUT it is high Time to pass to the *Second* Thing to be observed in the Text, which I must but just touch upon, and which I wish were to be enlarged upon by a better Pen.

II. *LET us consider the* Honour *done to* David *the sweet Psalmist and King of* Israel, *in this* Record *concerning him.* The Mention of him as the *sweet Psalmist of* Israel, and the Tradition of this his Character to the latest Ages of Time in the History of Scripture, is to be reckoned among none of the smallest Honours done to this Man of God. Here

1. *GOD himself has put a great Honour upon him in this Record.* And he is most assuredly the best Judge of Honour; yea, he is the Fountain from whence all true Honour derives; and his Approbation and Testimony is the highest Dignity that can be conferred upon Mortals. God himself has here made his Name, *as a sweet Singer*, venerable and great, by allowing it a Place in his own Word and Oracles, which are the Register of the *Worthies of* Israel.

BUT this is not all the Honour done to King *David*, and so to all that have improved themselves in this Divine Art of *Music and Psalmody*, that he is there mentioned with Applause and Respect; but the *Manner of this Record* is a very honourable Circumstance. This Part of his Character seems to be put upon a sort of *Parity* with his Regal Dignity and Imperial Glory. *The Man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of* Jacob, *THE SWEET PSALMIST OF* ISRAEL! The *sweet Psalmist of* Israel, *and the anointed of the God of* Jacob, are not unworthy of one another. The great Services this Man of God performed for the Church in the Capacity of a *Psalmist*, are esteemed

† *Psal.* 147. 1.

esteemed worthy to be enumerated with the Kingly Honours conferred upon him by the God of Heaven, and the glorious Administration of his Kingdom. Nor is King *David* the only Person to whom Heaven has done the Honour of a Record in the Lists of Fame: The Scriptures afford us such a Number of these Instances, as the Time would fail us to mention. Even from *Jubal the Father of all such as handle the Harp and Organ,* to ‖ *the hundred and forty four thousand, who sung before the Throne a new Song, and could learn to play upon their Golden Harps.* *Moses* and *Miriam*, *Asaph* and *Haman*, and a Multitude of those who excelled in this sweet and heavenly Skill, are honoured by God with a Record in his Word. But to conclude this Head, Not only in this World will God put all possible Marks of Respect and Honour upon them; but in the other he will applaud and reward them before Men and Angels; exalting them into the highest Quires of them that sing the Praises of God to all Eternity.

2. *THE Church of Saints and Angels will honour them.* The *Saints* revere them as *Leaders of the Quire*, and do not fail to make an honourable Mention of them, as Restorers of the Worship of God, the Promotion and Perfection whereof lie very near their Hearts. Upon the Consideration of these their Services to God and Religion, their Names are not only had in Respect by the Churches of Christ while they live, but shall be had in Remembrance, and diffuse a sweet Odour, be as an Oyntment poured forth, to all Posterity. The Churches shall bless them after they are dead and gone, and remember all their laudable Essays to render *their* Worship of God, sweet and beautiful, orderly and edifying. Then shall it be said of the Church, *This and that Man was born of her*, who excelled in the heavenly Exercise of *Music* and of *singing of Psalms.* These were they who first taught us to sing the Songs of *Zion*, and after the best Manner to chant forth the Praises of our God! Thus do the Church

of

‖ *Gen.* 4. 21. *Rev.* 14. 1, 2, 3.

of Saints honour them, as they are an Honour and Ornament to the Church.

YEA the *Church of Angels*, who always rejoice in the good Improvements of the Church on Earth, conceive no small Delight and Satisfaction in the Essays of the Children of Men to imitate their *Hallelujahs*, and bring them as near as possible to the same heavenly Perfection. They being Witnesses of our Worship, and ever present in the Assemblies of the Saints, are highly gratified to behold us striving to bear a Part in their Quire. They look upon us with Honour and Respect; and as by the Gospel we are brought to *join* * *the innumerable Company of Angels*, that sing the Praises of God; so the *Day* is hastening, when they shall not disdain in the fullest Consort to unite with us in sounding forth the Songs and Melodies of the heavenly *Zion*: taking us into an everlasting Partnership in their cælestial Music and Harmonies.

FROM the whole we learn the *Honour* due to a *sweet Psalmist*, and which God and Saints and Angels shall pay them upon the score of so fine and religious an Accomplishment. Let me only observe here, that as not only the greatest and most worthy Persons mentioned in the Scripture History were fond of this Skill, and esteemed it none of the smallest of their Acquisitions and Honours; so also great Men of all Ages have had this Science in Veneration. Among the Heathen, as *Quintilian* informs us †, Men most famous for *Wisdom*, yea and of the severest Morals, did in no small Measure cultivate this Divine Art. Such were *Pythagoras*, *Socrates*, *Plato*, &c. Yea says he, not only the greatest *Philosophers* and *wise Men*, but *Princes* and *great Captains* did not disdain to play upon Musical Instruments, and sing to them with their Voices. Such were *Lycurgus* and others which he there mentions.

But

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* *Heb.* 12. 22. † Vid. Quint. Instit. Orat. Lib. 1. Cap. 16. *De Musica & ejus Laudibus*, P. 69. *Duces maximos & Fidibus & Tibiis cecinisse*, ibid.

BUT what is more to our Purpose, there have not been wanting (as History informs us) Instances of some of the *greatest Princes* that have ever been in the *Christian World*, as well as the *Pagan*, who had this Art in the highest Esteem and Honour. Witness the great Names of *Constantine*, *Theodosius*, *and Justinian*, *Charles the Great*, and others. Some of which have composed *Hymns* of Praise to Christ, and all of them were famous for their Performances of *Music* in the Assemblies of the *Christians*. Not to mention any of a more modern Date, who have not thought it beneath their Grandeur, but to be their truest Glory, to be listed and numbered among the *Singers of Israel!*

THERE remains still *One* Exemple more of a *Sweet Psalmist*, which is so great and so glorious, that it is impossible *Music* and *Psalmody* should derive any further Honours from its Professors and Admirers, than what it has from His Practice and Approbation thereof, and that is our blessed *Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST*. Of whom it is recorded by some of the *Evangelists*, that at the Institution and Celebration of the *Eucharist* or *holy Supper*, He ‖ *sang an Hymn* with his Disciples. I have often thought how melodiously and *divinely* Sweet, that blessed Man, who was *more than a Man*, and who knew all the infinite Varieties, and even unsearchable Melodies, that lie hid in the Nature of Sounds, performed his Part in the Consort. And then how suddenly and insensibly are we rapt and carried away in our Thoughts to Heaven, to behold him there at the Head of the immortal Quires of the Saints and Angels above!—— But the Theme is too Sublime, the Thought too Vast to be indulged by a mortal Quill, and it is not lawful to utter freely upon it; deserving rather to be adored in profound Silence, than to suffer thro' our rude and unhallowed Essays to describe it!—— All I shall add is this, Behold *the Son of God as a sweet Psalmist*, and allow the Character from henceforward to be truly great and honourable!

‖ Matt. 26. 30. Mark 14. 26.

BUT we must hasten to make a *brief Application* of the Words.

APPLICATION.

USE I. *WHAT a pity and what a shame is it to abuse so sweet and heavenly an Art to the base Ends and Designs of Impiety, Vice and Debauchery!* To commit such a *Sacrilege*, as to prostitute our *Glory* ‖ to the Devil, and serve the Interests of Hell thro' the Means of this heavenly Science! Verily, Such *Music* shall finish in everlasting Weeping, Wailing and Gnashing of Teeth!

USE II. *HOW ought we to labour after the Character of holy* David. I hope and trust, *My Brethren*, that your good Exemple will in this Regard, be of good Influence to the Churches of Christ in this Land, that they may also use all possible Endeavours *to restore banished Music to its ancient Seat in the Temple of God.* That they may be stirred up and encouraged to come into this noble and pious Design of rescuing the divine Science of *Psalmody* from all the Disadvantages and Encumbrances, it now labours under, and of reducing it to its *primitive* Form and *ancient* Perfection. All compleatly conducive to Decency and good Order, and in the End to the Glory of God.

SIRS, *Consider God will honour and bless you.* For they who *honour God, he will honour them* *. They who have been much employed in advancing the Glory of God, and the Edification of his Church, shall never want Testimonies of Respect and Honour from him.

AND the *Churches* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the *Angels* above will honour you; your Names shall be precious and sweet with them. And, as we said before, we that are truly sollicitous and careful to excel in the Performance

‖ *Psal.* 57. 8. * 1 *Sam.* 2. 3.

formance of our Part in the Songs of the Temple here on Earth, *viz.* to improve in the *external and mechanical Skill* of sweetly modulating the Voice, and the *internal and spiritual Skill* of true Devotion of Soul, shall not fail of an exalted Seat in the glorious *Choirs* of Heaven.

WHEREFORE, let us above all labour after the *inward Harmony* of Piety and Devotion of Mind. Studying to make Melody to the Lord in our Hearts. In the harmonious Vehicle of our Voices sending up to Heaven the inward holy Sentiments and Dispositions of our Souls. Such an Agreement of || Heart and Voice is a sweet *Symphony* in the Ears of God, and with such *Sacrifices of Praise he is well pleased!*

USE III. Last. WE may from the Doctrinal Part of this Discourse infer the *infinite Sweetness of the Songs of the heavenly World.* The *Ecstasies* that our hoarser Harmony here below is able to cast us into, are well known; but O the Perfection of the Songs above! O the ineffable Sweetness of the Anthems sounded forth by Saints and Angels! What mortal Tongue can describe them! Who in the present State of Imperfection can conceive the ravishing *Echoes* of their *Music*!

THERE the Saints shall be possessed of *Bodies*, and *bodily Organs*, which shall be perfectly fitted and adapted to all the Designs of Harmony and Praise. This glorious Advantage shall accrue to them from the *Resurrection of the Just.*

THERE also shall they be endued with bright & enlarged *Minds*, to indite Words which it is not possible for Man in our State of Darkness and Mortality to utter. Mysterious Themes! Incomprehensible Music!

THE

|| *Non Vox, sed Votum; non Musica Chordula, sed Cor: Non Clamor, sed Amor, psallit in Aure Dei.*

THE God of all Grace grant, that You and I may another Day hear and join them! That we may experimentally know what is past our present Comprehension; That we may faithfully perform our Part in the Songs of the Church here below, and at length may be introduced into the eternal Temple of God above, to sing his Praises for ever and ever!

O, Let every Thing that hath Breath, praise the Lord! While I live will I praise the Lord; I will sing Praises to my God while I have a Being! AMEN.

FINIS.

The ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael.

A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Lecture held in BOSTON, by the SOCIETY for promoting

Regular & *Good* Singing,

And for Reforming the

Depravations and Debaſements

OUR

PSALMODY labours under,

In order to introduce the proper and true

Old Way of SINGING.

Now publiſhed at the Deſire of ſeveral MINISTERS that heard it, and at the Requeſt of the SOCIETY aforeſaid.

By THOMAS WALTER, M. A.
Miniſter of a Church in *Roxbury*.

Pſal. 100. 2. —— *Come before his Preſence with Singing.*
Pſal. 147. 1. *Praiſe ye the Lord; for it is good to ſing Praiſes to our God; for it is pleaſant, and Praiſe is comely.*

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